

ADVANCING EXPERT CARE STRATEGIC PLAN AND CAMPAIGN

The Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association, the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Foundation, and the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center have joined forces to transform the care and culture of serious illness.

Three national nursing organizations have announced a collaborative effort to transform the care and culture of serious illness in the United States. Together, the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association (HPNA), the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Foundation (HPNF), and the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC, formerly known as National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses [NBCHPN]) launched a \$5 million campaign aimed at increasing the number of certified hospice and palliative nurses, advancing research into best practices of hospice and palliative care, elevating palliative nursing leadership at the local and national levels, and enhancing nursing competence through certification. In addition to unveiling the Campaign, it was also announced that the 3 organizations strengthened their strategic alignment by adopting a shared mission and vision statements. The shared mission statement of the 3 organizations is "advancing expert care in serious illness," whereas the shared vision is "to transform the care and culture of serious illness." These singular mission and vision statements formed the foundation for the strategic planning of the Advancing Expert Care Campaign.

The singular mission and vision was also a major impetus behind the NBCHPN's decision to change its name to the HPCC. Since expansion of certification programs over the past 12 years has extended specialty certification to all members of the nursing team and to professionals in other disciplines, the change to HPCC reflects the broader certificant base. In addition to offering opportunities for future growth in credentialing programs, the new HPCC name represents an ongoing commitment to synergy and collaboration with HPNA and the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Foundation (HPNF). While HPCC has always been strategically aligned with HPNA and HPNF, it just wasn't obvious to the broader healthcare community. The new name and new acronym HPCC fits well with HPNA and HPNF, allowing the three organizations to create a stronger brand identity. It is important to note that the new HPCC name does not alter the significance or validity of the current credentials, and that each of the 7 certification programs' names and credentials remain unchanged.

"Three organizations, one common mission, and one shared vision. At no time has a strategic alignment been more critical," said Sally Welsh, the chief executive officer of HPNA, HPNF, and HPCC. "As the number of families impacted by serious illness continues to grow, the role of hospice and palliative nurses is becoming increasingly important in the delivery of health care. For those patients battling serious illness, hospice and palliative nurses serve as

key leaders in both care delivery and care coordination. It is our goal to not only increase the number of nurses who specialize in hospice and palliative care, but also improve upon the high level of hospice and palliative care that already exists.”

The goal of the Advancing Expert Care Campaign is to transform the care and culture of serious illness through 6 core strategies: (1) ongoing evaluation and research into the educational needs of hospice and palliative professionals; (2) the design of programs, courses, and curriculum to advance expert care in serious illness; (3) advancing research into best practices of hospice and palliative care while supporting and developing palliative nurse researchers; (4) the development of nursing leadership programs at the local and national levels; (5) enhancing nursing competence through certification; (6) the creation of programs to support and increase the number of nurses and other professionals certified in hospice and palliative care; and (7) ongoing research into the correlation between nursing certification and patient outcomes.

“There is a perfect storm brewing,” said Jennifer Gentry, the president of HPNA. “With the aging baby-boomer population, the number of people with serious illness is growing, and there will soon be a critical shortage of hospice and palliative professionals. Our ability to adequately care for patients with a serious illness could soon become a critical issue, which is why HPNA, HPNF, and HPCC decided the time was right to jointly tackle this issue with such an ambitious campaign.”

By designing and offering education for hospice and palliative nurses and other professionals that takes into account changes in the health care delivery model, advances in technology, and shifting patient demographics, HPNA, HPNF, and HPCC will not only create more skilled hospice and palliative professionals, but also grow the number of certified caregivers who can help close the gap in what could be a critical shortage of professionals. “Our goal is to develop and offer programs to increase the number of nurses and other staff who are certified in hospice and palliative care, as well as the level of professional competence,” said Kathy Kobler, the president of HPCC. “These 3 organizations are going to take the lead in developing and implementing programs that support palliative nursing leaders who will help transform the care and culture of serious illness from the bedside to the national level. We also want to identify opportunities to enhance the recruitment and retention of these nurses.”

The number of certified hospice and palliative nurses needed to provide care for this growing population is increasing. Currently, there are approximately 13,000 nurses certified in hospice and palliative care by HPCC. As part of the Advancing Expert Care Campaign, the 3 organizations plan to develop and

implement strategies to collect palliative nursing workforce data to better understand and fulfill the need. "We know there is a shortage today of certified hospice and palliative nurses," said Jane Sidwell, the president of HPNF. "The Advancing Expert Care Campaign will fund needed education, research, advocacy, and leadership programs that will help us attract more nurses into this profession while retaining those nurses who have already chosen to specialize in this field, which, in turn, will help us avert a health care crisis in the near future."

With the announcement of the Advancing Expert Care Campaign and shared mission and vision statements, the HPNA, HPNF, and HPCC also launched a joint Web site: <http://www.AdvancingExpertCare.com>. Contributions to the Campaign can be made directly on the Web site.